1: Burrows--35 (1947-48) Woleaians
116, 245, 105 Ifalik

"We have seen that the coconut is meat and drink to the people of Ifalik; supplies most of the material for their houses; provides the cordage used to hold all composite wooden articles together; makes baskets, mats, fuel, and has a multitude of other uses, even acting as a symbol and agent of supernatural power. The list above does not pretend to be complete. Whether human life could be sustained on such an atoll without this plant is open to question. If it could, it would have to be a radically different life from that which the people lead there now."

1: Burrows--123-124 (1947-48) Woleaians 1-3
116, 476, 105 Ifalik

"The framework within which goods and services are distributed has been partly stated, partly implied, in the foregoing discussion. A summary of the main points follows:

Each individual shares in the use of the homestead and arable land of [124] his maternal lineage. This involves a claim, not only to shelter, but also to food from cultivated plants and domestic animals.

Claims of this kind are lifelong and inalienable. What we call real property changes hands only as individual claims are initiated by birth or adoption, or extinguished by death.

A man acquires an additional claim by marriage, when he joins the household of his wife. Thereafter he lives mainly on the produce of her land, but without losing his right to draw on his own heritage. In cases of residence other than matrilocal, all who take up residence on some homestead other than their maternal one assume similar claims to the new homestead and whatever property goes with it.

Collected food--fish (except yellow-fin tuna), other sea-food (except turtle), land crabs, terns--is shared among the households of those who get it, or distributed farther if there is a surplus. For example, fish caught by a district expedition are distributed among all households of the district. If any are left over, they go to other districts. The exceptions, delicacies reserved for the clans of highest rank, are also distributed beyond these clans as far as the supply will go.

Each individual is obliged to contribute services, according to sex, age, and physical condition, by taking part in the work of his household and in communal tasks carried out by his neighborhood, district, island, or by the whole population of the atoll.

Specialization, beyond the general division of labor by sex and age, is confined to a few occupations: government, navigation, supervision of carpentry on canoes and public buildings, tattooing, some forms of healing, and some religious activities.

This economic system provides, indeed imposes, approximate equality of wealth. Some lineages, to be sure, have more arable land than others. But none is landless. And none can benefit from more land than its members can cultivate, nor as a rule--since there is no market for staple products-- dispose of more than they can consume. Further distribution on special occasions which constitute exceptions to this rule, will be discussed later.

This situation offers very little opportunity or incentive for a prestige economy. Not only can no individual or group acquire much more property than others; there would be no advantage in doing so. Honor and status are not equated with possession or expenditure of material goods, except in a few cases, as canoe ownership and display at funerals.

Control of labor is almost as equalitarian as ownership of property. The chiefs, and, within the household, the senior individuals, can command to some extent the services of others. But tradition channels, and in effect limits, the purposes to which labor is

applied. It is used only for the common welfare, never to enrich one individual or group at the expense of others."

1: Burrows--198 (1947-48) Woleaians
116, 105 Ifalik

"These gaps in religious behavior can be summed up in the statement that the pattern of rites of passage in Ifalik is a scanty, broken one; and that the people do not use magic on each other. Healing magic may look like an exception to the latter statement. But it is not a real exception, for the magic is aimed at the evil spirits thought to inflict disease rather than at the patient. The gaps in the pattern call for explanation; but that can not be attempted here. The explanation would have to be either historical, or psychological, or both. A historical explanation would necessitate comparison of the customs practised on Ifalik with those of surrounding peoples, a task beyond the scope of this local ethnography. A psychological explanation would require fuller data, of a kind that may be afforded by Spiro's line of inquiry, but not by mine."